

Report of: Community Engagement Officer

To: Community and Resources Committee

Subject: Victoria Park Play Area centre piece planning consent

Date: 11/09/2023

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT: For committee to authorise the submission of a planning application for new play equipment within Victoria Park.

1. INTRODUCTION

TDC officers along with a specifically set up community group have secured funding to deliver an improved play space for our community and visitors, within Victoria Park. Now that funding has been secured, we have followed our procurement process, invited 6 specialist play equipment providers and have a new design submitted. See attached. TDC recognise the Victoria Park is a flagship site of the town and wish to provide a play area that the people of Bideford can be proud of and others can recognise as being one of the best in the area, generating more visits to Bideford.

The community have strong opinions about the need to improve the play facilities and have been engaged with the Council along this design journey. This is evidenced by the receipt of over 900 responses to an online survey. School children and members of the public have informed every aspect to the proposed play area.

2. REPORT

As part of the designs, the main centre piece item which will replace the current wooden 'Bideford' structure, is nearly 9m high, providing a truly exciting item for children to enjoy. Please see the attached designs.

A structure of this height cannot be delivered by the Council under permitted development rights and therefore it requires planning permission. Health and safety experts have been consulted and are happy with the design of this structure. To enable the project to achieve its start date of end of October/November 2023, we need to submit this application as a matter of urgency. The application is prepared and ready to submit.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

N/A

Financial Implications

The Bideford Bridge Trust, who are significantly helping to finance the scheme (£100,000) have confirmed they are pleased with the proposed design and signature piece element.



£150,000 of the funding has been achieved from the Rural Prosperity Fund which needs to be spent by March 2024. If this project is not completed, TDC run the risk of losing these funds, therefore not being able to achieve its aims with this project.

Human Resources Implications

N/A

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

N/A

Equality/Diversity

The proposed play facility will provide enhanced accessibility for children of a range of ages.

Risk Management

Risk assessments for the delivery and operation of the proposed play equipment have been prepared.

If committee does not agree to seek planning permission, we need to reconsider the scheme of which, could mean costs of materials going up and taking longer to deliver.

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Delivery of this project is a key component of delivery of the Council's wider play strategy.

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

N/A

Climate Change

N/A

Ward Member and Lead Member Views

01/09/23 – Cllr Piper

'It will be great to see this much needed project move forward to the planning stage. I commend the work carried out to date by the officers and community to date.'

4. CONCLUSIONS

Victoria Park Play area is in need of rejuvenation and this is an opportunity to achieve a fantastic play space for our community and visitors to enjoy for free.

The project is fully funded and tendered so is it will be possible to commence delivery as soon as the necessary consent is in place.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS

For this committee to authorise the submission of a planning application for the proposed play equipment in Victoria Park that cannot be delivered within permitted development rights

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:

- School children and members of the public
- Bideford Bridge Trust
- Play Area design specialist

Date of consultation: Ongoing since July 2020

Officers consulted: Property team (Health and Safety, technical), Economic Development, Major Projects, Planning,

Contact Officer: Community Engagement Officer

Background papers

